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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 000696

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MICHAEL IGNATIEFF OFFERS VISION FOR LIBERAL PARTY,  
CAUTION ON MISSILE DEFENSE

1. Summary: Harvard-based Canadian Michael Ignatieff offered a compelling case as the Liberal Party's keynote speaker for why the Liberals are the most successful party in Canada and can be expected to remain so well into the new century. He attributes the Party's success to a national (as opposed to regional or class-based) program that includes protecting and enhancing the national unity of the country, preserving and defending Canada's national sovereignty, and advancing the cause of social justice for all Canadians. Ignatieff offered caution that in the effort to distance itself from the militarization of space, Canada could go too far, and actually lose control over its sovereignty. It must deal with the BMD program in such a way that still allows Canada a seat at the table in the protection of the North American landmass. His comments were cited in the next day's debate on missile debate, but they did not stop the overwhelming adoption of a resolution in the defense caucus & rejecting any role for Canada in the BMDS and all other systems that include space-based weapons.8 End Summary

#### LIBERALISM IN THE AGE OF TERROR

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2. The keynote speaker in the Liberal Party Convention kickoff meeting was Toronto born Michael Ignatieff, currently head of the Carr Center on Human Rights at Harvard. Ignatieff is the grandson of Russian immigrants and son of a prominent Canadian diplomat and has spent much of the past 2 decades traveling to war zones as a reporter and writer, sort of the Robert Kaplan of Canada. He has been identified as one who could be considered for a key leadership role in the Liberal Party in the future. Ignatieff is best known for his recent writings on political ethics in an age of terror, which lays out a middle course between the requirement for aggressive actions to protect liberal societies against sub-national mega-threats, and the need for Western Civilization to retain its ethical soul in the process.

3. Ignatieff opened by paying tribute to the four RCMP officers killed in the line of duty earlier in the day, reminding the audience that this brutal killing of members of a force that is the very symbol of Canada ought to invoke not only sorrow but anger among Canadians. Ignatieff's belief in the measured and prepared use of force while also consistently trumpeting the social roots of Canadian liberalism, was a common theme.

#### THE PARTY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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4. Ignatieff highlighted what he said were the three fundamentals that made the Liberals the governing party of the 20th Century in Canada and would make it the governing party of the 21st Century. He dismissed the other parties as being regional or class based, stating that only the Liberals represent the united nation of Canada. The party does so, he said, by protecting and enhancing the cause of national unity, preserving and defending national sovereignty, and advancing the cause of social justice for all Canadians.

#### A LIGHT TO THE NATIONS

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5. With regard to unity, Ignatieff spoke strongly in French about saying "non" to the division of the nation, and specifically saying "non" to the Bloc Quebecois. He urged caution about how the nation deals with the issue of new regional resource wealth, urging the provinces to work closely with the federal government to ensure that the issue does not create fissures in the country's federal structure. There is a global stake in Canada getting this right, Ignatieff said, since Canada is the most successful multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic country in the world. Canada should be a light to the nations by demonstrating that a nation of this complexity can exist with peace, order, and good government. Exporting this success to places such as Sri Lanka and the Balkans, Ignatieff said, should be what Canada's foreign policy is all about.

#### MANAGING SOVEREIGNTY

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6. On the question of sovereignty Ignatieff said that U.S.-Canada relations will be the country's biggest issue in the next generation. Anti-Americanism, Ignatieff said, is an

electoral ghetto and the party would do well to leave it to the NDP. Continentalism (code for falling in line as a U.S. security puppet), is also a non-starter, Ignatieff said, which leaves the third option of being reliable neighbors, firm friends, but fully independent of its neighbor to the south. Ignatieff received a rousing applause when he reminded his audience that in the last two major wars Canadians fought for years before Americans were ever on the beaches. He suggested that when Canada in the second half of the century took an independent stand, e.g. on Cuba, China, and the ICC, its neighbor &respected us when we say no, because when we say yes we mean it.<sup>8</sup>

17. Ignatieff then suggested that more must be done to be a credible international player in the world. &We can,t defend sovereignty with sermons,<sup>8</sup> Ignatieff suggested, but need our own military, our own intelligence service, and we need to be real players in the global war on terror. He reminded the audience that Canada is next door to the main target of terrorism and must ensure it is not used as a staging ground for terrorists. He then spoke of the larger war on terror, suggesting that the central problem in failed states is security, and if Canada is going to be active working in the failed states that are the breeding ground for terrorism, its military &must be able to fire back.<sup>8</sup> He received a huge ovation when he said that Canada should never again allow a repeat of Rwanda, where a Canadian general was given a mission without the means to achieve it.

#### MISSILE DEFENSE AND NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY -----

18. With regards to missile defense Ignatieff sounded a note of caution over the party,s rejection of the BMD program. He said he understood that the government had listened to the party and the party had listened to the country. But he suggested that it was necessary to balance fear of weapons in space, with the protection of Canada,s own sovereignty. The issue should be what will best defend Canada,s sovereignty, not whether one is pro or anti-American, and a vigorous and unmanaged rejection of the missile defense program could lead to &less control over our national sovereignty.<sup>8</sup> Canada must be there at the table when key decisions are made, and must manage this issue so that this is a reality, Ignatieff stated.

#### THE PARTY OF EQUALITY -----

19. Finally, on the Liberal Party being the party of equality, Ignatieff received the most robust reaction of the evening when he couched the gay marriage issue in these terms. He stuck closely to the party line in saying that the Liberal Party would not require religious groups to perform marriages that violated their religious principles, but would also not deny a basic right to people because of their sexual orientation. He went on to defend the Liberal Party as the best defender of Canada,s social justice because it is the party that is the most competent. He suggested however, that in a Canada with 1 million children in poverty, there is more to be done. He also received strong applause when he suggested that the federal government should use its power to make education more of a priority, to make Canadians the best educated and most capable citizens in the world.

110. Comment: Ignatieff was reportedly less animated than usual in order not to show up the Prime Minister who will be the keynote speaker at the central Saturday night meeting. He nonetheless made a riveting speech that helped buck up the party faithful, and made a compelling case for why the Liberals are the country,s most successful party. Ignatieff,s call for a more robust military mirrors the case that is by now widely accepted by Canadians and may soon start to bear fruit. It will also be interesting to see how his views on missile defense play out in other sessions when the BMD issue is discussed. Ignatieff is someone to watch in the leadership of the Liberal Party of the future.

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